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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 9TH MARINES



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 9TH MARINES

By

Truman R. Strobridge

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PREFACE

"A Brief History of the 9th Marines" is revised at this time in order to provide a concise narrative of the activity of the regiment since its activation in 1917 to its present participation in Vietnam as part of the III Marine Amphibious Force. This history is based on the official records of the United States Marine Corps and appropriate secondary sources.

It is published for the information of those interested in the regiment and the role it played and continues to play in adding to Marine Corps traditions and battle honors.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 9th MARINES

By

Truman R. Strobbridge

World War I

The 9th Marines had its origin in the great expansion of the Marine Corps during World War I. Created as one of the two infantry regiments of the Advanced Base Force, it was assigned to duty in the Caribbean area as a mobile force in readiness. The 9th's mission was the protection of advanced naval bases and the Panama Canal in the event of enemy action. (1) On 10 November 1917, the 142d anniversary of the Marine Corps, the Commandant signed the order directing the formation of the regiment. (2)

Ten days later, at Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia, the 9th Regiment was organized. (3) Its Headquarters Company was activated and one machine gun and eight rifle companies were assigned to its three battalions. Three of the units, the 14th (machine gun), 36th, and 100th Companies, were transferred to the east coast from the naval base at San Diego; the remaining six, the 121st through 126th Companies, were formed from Marines in training at Parris Island, South Carolina. (4)

Cuba had entered the war on the Allied side soon after the entry of the United States, but insurgent bands left over from a recent rebellion still roamed the countryside, threatening the sugar crop vitally needed by the Allies for the war effort. (5) As a result, groups of Marines had been stationed in the sugar-growing districts to keep order. (6) The first mission of the newly formed 9th was to reinforce these Marines.

Sailing aboard the USS Von Steuben on 20 December from Newport News, Virginia, the regiment landed on the 24th at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. (7) The new unit took the field with a total strength of approximately 1,000 officers and men. After its arrival on the island, the 9th was joined with the 7th Regiment, already stationed there, into the 3d Provisional Brigade. (8) The Marines of the 9th established their camp at Deer Point, Guantanamo Bay and stood by in an alert status for whatever action was required of them. The call never came, however, and for seven months the men were occupied with routine drill and target practice in the immediate vicinity of the camp.

After the situation in Cuba improved, the 9th was withdrawn from the island and sent to Texas to forestall the possible disruption by German agents of vital shipments from the Mexican oil fields.(9) Embarking aboard the USS Hancock on 31 July 1918, the Brigade Headquarters and the 9th sailed from Guantanamo Bay for Galveston, Texas. Just before the departure, the 7th Regiment and Companies 34 and 100 of the 9th were detached from the 3d Provisional Brigade and left behind for duty in Cuba.

Upon arrival at Galveston on 6 August, the 9th disembarked and went into camp at Fort Crockett. The same day, the 8th Regiment, already stationed in Texas, was made part of the 3d Provisional Brigade, replacing the 7th which had remained in Cuba.(10) On 13 August, the strength of the 9th was increased, when three companies, the 154th, 155th, and 156th, were added to it.

Through the remainder of World War I, the Marines were to remain at Fort Crockett, spending their time in training and guard duty. As part of the mobile force of the Advanced Base Force, they had to be maintained at a high state of efficiency, available at all times for any use the Navy might have for them. (11) Although the anticipated trouble in Mexico did not occur, the presence near the Mexican Border of the 9th and other American forces probably helped keep the situation peaceful.

With the end of hostilities, the need for the 9th evaporated, so the regiment embarked 10 April 1919 aboard the USS Hancock for Philadelphia, where it arrived and unloaded 25 April. The same day, it was officially disbanded. Although the 9th did not win combat honors during World War I, it did perform the exacting task of keeping itself at peak effectiveness as a mobile force in readiness.

Reserve Interlude

For a period between the World Wars, the name of the 9th appeared again on the muster rolls of the Marine Corps. Organized 1 December 1925 as a Reserve Regiment, Central Reserve Area, the 9th's Headquarters was at Chicago.(12) Here, also, were located its aviation squadron and service company. The 1st Battalion was stationed at Chicago, with Company C at St. Paul, Minnesota, and Company D at Omaha, Nebraska. The 2d Battalion was stationed at Kansas City, Missouri, with Companies G and H at St. Louis, Missouri. The 3d Battalion was stationed at Cincinnati, Ohio, with Company K at Indianapolis, Indiana, and Companies L and M at Detroit, Michigan.

The mission of the regiment was to train and maintain at a high degree of preparedness a group of "civilian" Marines

that could be quickly transformed into "regular" Marines if the need arose. On 1 September 1937, the name of the 9th disappeared again from the Marine Corps' muster rolls, when all of its men were transferred to the 9th Reserve District, Great Lakes, Illinois.

World War II

Enough of the great surge of Marine recruits following Pearl Harbor had been processed by 12 February 1942 to make the establishment of another regiment possible, and the 9th Marines was organized at Camp Elliott, San Diego, as part of the 2d Marine Division.(13) By this reactivation, the regiment acquired its present and permanent designation, the 9th Marines.

The nucleus of the newly activated regiment, Headquarters and Service Company and the 3d Battalion, was formed by officers and men of the 2d Marines.(14) On 1 March, the 1st Battalion was activated, the largest percentage of its men coming from the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, recently returned from duty in Iceland.(15) Regimental Weapons Company and the 2d Battalion were organized on 1 April, completing the regiment and increasing its strength to 99 officers and 3,003 enlisted men.

Immediately, a training program was inaugurated to weld the 9th Marines into a hard-striking, fighting team. During the months of May and June, amphibious training was conducted in the San Diego-La Jolla area.(16) A depletion of strength was suffered on 15 June, when the regiment was called on to furnish the cadre for the formation of the 22d Marines.(17) Again in July the unit was further reduced when it supplied personnel for the newly formed 23d Marines.(18) Beginning 1 August, a gradual replacement of personnel soon brought the 9th back up to full strength. Two days later, it was detached from the 2d Marine Division and assigned to Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet.

The first four days of September were spent marching from Camp Elliott up the coast to the new Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside. On 8 September, the 9th was transferred to the newly activated 3d Marine Division, an association which was to last until the end of the war. Again the regiment engaged in intensive combat training, including two weeks of amphibious exercises in the San Diego-Oceanside area.(19)

Just a few weeks before shipping overseas, Colonel Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Commanding Officer of the 9th and later the 20th Commandant of the Marine Corps (1952-1955) suggested the design for the unique "Striking Ninth" insignia. Although not authorized for a shoulder patch, it was generally accepted and remained the regimental insignia during World War II.(20) "The emblem consists of a bald eagle with outstretched wings

carrying three chain links in each claw, the motto 'Striking' on a ribbon running through a large figure nine and another ribbon lettered 'Ninth Marines' below the shield. The chain links typify the interlocked, interdependent battalions forming the backbone of the Regiment. The eagle itself and the flashing lightning represent the striking power of the regiment." (21)

Sailing aboard the USS Mt. Vernon for New Zealand on 24 January 1943, the 9th Marines (Reinforced) arrived in Auckland on 5 February and disembarked two days later. Because of the lack of accommodations, separate camp sites were assigned for each of the major regimental units; a distance of 20 miles separated Headquarters, which was located at the Pukekohe race course, from the most distant battalion. (22) Jungle warfare training, several 60-mile hikes, and practice in the seizure of a beachhead, occupied the Marines until they loaded aboard five transports on 29 June bound for Guadalcanal, Solomons Islands. (23)

Arriving 6 July, the 9th Marines landed at Tetera Village and established camp about three miles from the village. In addition to garrison duty and a five-week period as the island working party, the regiment continued intensive training with emphasis on further jungle conditioning and patrol work to ready its men for the fighting to come. (24) Approximately a year and a half after its reactivation, the 9th Marines was to engage in its first battle.

Bougainville

Assigned to I Marine Amphibious Corps, the 9th was part of the force assigned to hit the beaches at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, on 1 November 1943. En route to its destination, the regiment spent a week at Efate in the New Hebrides, where it engaged in a final rehearsal, landing on a beach that was believed to resemble the one at Bougainville. (25)

The largest island in the Solomons, approximately 130 miles long by 30 miles wide, Bougainville was garrisoned by an estimated 35,000 Japanese soldiers. Possessing a rugged central mountain spine, swamps, and a thick almost impenetrable, jungle, the island's few existing trails offered about the only means of land travel. The torrential rains and the abundance of jungle life, especially the multitude of insects, added to the other difficulties of jungle travel.

Like the earlier Guadalcanal operation, the Bougainville campaign was a limited-objective assault designed to capture and defend a strategic airfield site--a vital link in the campaign to neutralize Rabaul, the Japanese stronghold on New Britain that was blocking the Allied advance up the Solomon

chain. The Cape Torokina region was selected for the landing because it was lightly defended by the Japanese, possessed a suitable site for an air base, and was part of a natural defensive region approximately eight miles by six miles in dimension.

At 0730 on D-Day, the landing craft carrying the 9th Marines' assault waves crossed the line of departure and headed for the chosen beaches of Empress Augusta Bay. Landing with three battalions abreast on the extreme left of the division beachhead, the regiment encountered little enemy opposition. It rapidly crossed the beaches, established defensive positions, and sent a strong patrol to the Laruma River mouth to protect the division's left flank.

The first unit to see action was the 4th Platoon of the Regimental Weapons Company as it supported the 3d Raider Battalion, attached to the 9th, in securing Puruata Island. Stiff opposition from well-concealed Japanese riflemen and machine-gunners was encountered, but by noon of the next day, resistance on the island had ceased. Meanwhile, a high surf and a steeply sloping beach were hindering the landing schedule on the Bougainville beaches assigned to the 9th by causing 86 boats to either broach or dump their cargoes into the sea.

When it did not appear that the Japanese would offer opposition on the left (west) flank, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 9th Marines were moved on 2-3 November to the east sector. This consolidation of the beachhead left the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines (3/9) on the extreme left flank. Before 3/9 could rejoin its regiment, the Japanese made their only attempt to reinforce their troops and the Battle of Koromokina Lagoon was on.

Early on the morning of 7 November, four Japanese destroyers made a surprise counter-landing on the beaches west of the beachhead, unloading about 475 men rushed down from Rabaul. Two of the landing boats, containing about 50 men, actually landed only 400 yards from 3/9's positions in the rear of its combat outpost. The Japanese tried fruitlessly to penetrate the Marine defenses and then retired into a swamp area nearby to regroup.

The 3d Battalion immediately counterattacked and, in a heavy fire fight lasting about five hours, destroyed a major portion of the original landing force. It could make little headway, however, since the Japanese continued to land reinforcements further down the beach and had the advantage of the foxholes abandoned by the Marines of the 9th when they evacuated these beaches. At 1315 the 3d Marines had to relieve 3/9 because of the latter's losses in attacking an emplaced enemy in dense jungle.(26)

Simultaneously with the counterlanding on the left, the Japanese had also launched an attack against the right flank of the perimeter, defended by the 9th with the 2d Marine Raider Battalion attached. At the Piva Trail road block, the 2d Raiders, with the mortars of the 9th furnishing fire support, forced the Japanese to break off contact.

At 0945 on 10 November, the 9th Marines (less the 3d Battalion) again attacked after an air strike and mortar barrage on the enemy positions astride the Piva Trail. Advancing against light resistance, the Marines moved up and dug in across the Numa Numa Trail.

Continuing forward in the divisional attack towards the Final Beachhead Line, the 9th advanced with its patrols ready for instant action, for the closeness of the terrain and proximity of the enemy precluded any carelessness. By 23 November, it had moved up as far as the impassable swamps to its front would allow.(27) The same day, the 3d and 9th were ordered to exchange sub-sectors, thus allowing the latter to take over the active sector while the 3d, which had engaged in heavy fighting, could take over the relatively quiet sector.

Before the exchange could be made and in order to continue the advance, 1/9 passed through the 3d Marines on 25 November and launched an attack upon a ridge, later known as "Grenade Hill" from the hail of grenades tossed down on the Marines by the Japanese. The dense jungle prohibited mortar support, and the necessity of close-in fighting hindered the advance until the enemy decided to evacuate the ridge during the night. After occupying "Grenade Hill," 1/9 reorganized and continued the attack until the final objective, the hill mass dominating the East-West Trail, was taken. This action ended the Battle of Piva Forks. The engagement had broken the back of organized enemy resistance and cleared the way for a substantial expansion of the beachhead perimeter.

The 9th Marines, after completing the exchange of sectors with the 3d on the night of 26-27 November, advanced on the more active front, reaching the new forward line on the 28th and sending out strong patrols. Later, advancing with other units of the 3d Marine Division, the regiment moved up to occupy the new battle lines, relieving the 1st Parachute Regiment on Hill 1000 on 10 December.

With the establishment of the Final Beachhead Line, the remaining action was confined to patrol activity. The 9th Marines was relieved on the front lines two days after Christmas, after spending 57 days helping to clear the Japanese from the Empress Augusta Bay area. Tested in the crucible of jungle combat, the Marines of the 9th had not been found wanting.

GUAM

Returning to Guadalcanal on 30 December, the regiment reoccupied its former camp and began arduous training for a proposed assault landing on Kavieng, New Ireland, another step in the offensive against Rabaul.(28) After months of preparation, which included practice in street fighting, the 9th was just ready to embark aboard ship when the Kavieng campaign was cancelled. Once again the regiment began readying itself for an assault landing, this time on Guam. The culminating point of the training was a full-scale division landing exercise at Cape Esperance, Guadalcanal.(29) With the final rehearsal behind them, the Marines of the 9th, now combat-tested veterans, stood ready to lead the assault on the beaches of Guam.

The largest and southernmost of the Marianas group, Guam is a peanut-shaped island of volcanic origin, approximately 30 miles long, with a width varying from four to eight miles. A central lowland in the middle divides the island almost equally between the high plateau area to the north and the broken mountainous area to the south. The rugged terrain is blanketed by vegetation ranging from low, dense jungle to sword grass. Almost the entire island is ringed by ragged coral reefs. A portion of the western shore was the most militarily valuable sector of the island.

Several beaches suitable for full scale landings were located on the western shore, but the Japanese defenders had painstakingly fortified these with underwater mines and obstacles. Hoping to prevent prohibitive casualties, III Amphibious Corps in charge of the operation counted on surprising the Japanese by crossing wide reefs to land on beaches which were ringed by steep cliffs. To add to the enemy's confusion, two simultaneous landings were to be made on beaches five miles apart. The 3d Marine Division would land on the beaches between Adelup Point and Asan Point, while the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was to land at Agat to the south of Orote Peninsula.

Assigned Blue Beach on the extreme right flank of the 3d Marine Division, the 9th had several missions. Its first objective was to seize the ridges just inland from the beach and then, to expand the beachhead to the perimeter designated by III Corps. On order, the regiment was to drive west around the shore of Apra Harbor to link up with the 1st Brigade.(30)

At 0740 on 21 July 1944, the amphibian tractors carrying the first assault waves of the 9th Marines started toward the shore of Guam, which had just undergone the heaviest preparatory bombardment yet delivered by the Navy in the Pacific.(31) After crossing the reefs and landing the Marines on the beach, the amphibian tractors hastened back to the reef's edge to rendezvous with landing boats bringing up following waves.

Landing on Blue Beach, the 9th Marines moved ashore in a column of battalion landing teams; 3d in assault, followed by the 2d, with the 1st in reserve. Although the right assault company of 3/9 bogged down until tanks could be brought up to supply supporting fire, the left assault company swept forward to seize the ridge to its front with astonishing speed, thus gaining its first objective and throwing the Japanese into confusion. The 1st and 2d Battalions passed through 3/9 to continue the attack, but increased resistance from enemy-occupied caves stopped the advance about 400 yards short of its second objective and the Marines dug in for the night.

Again the next day, the only real progress made by the 3d Marine Division was made by the 9th as it established a fairly deep salient in the enemy defenses and pushed rapidly south along the shore to seize the Piti Navy Yard. During the same day, it engaged in a successful shore-to-shore assault against Cabras Island. For the next two days, the action of the 9th was confined to intensive patrolling.

During a division attack on 25 July, the 9th's 2d Battalion, attached to the 3d Marines, spearheaded that regiment's assault upon the Fonte Plateau, the site of an elaborate Japanese Division command post. Within an hour, 2/9 had secured its first objective, Mt. Tenjo Road, which gave the Marines a much-needed route over which to bring up tanks.

On the night of 25-26 July, the 2d Battalion, in its exposed position, received the brunt of the Japanese Fonte Plateau counterattack. Beating off seven determined thrusts, the Marines held their ground, although they suffered over 50 per cent casualties. In the morning, the bodies of 950 Japanese soldiers in front of the battalion's lines testified to the fury of the enemy attack. Still continuing in the advance, 2/9 was to see much heavy fighting before it seized the Fonte Plateau on 29 July.

Out of this furious battle for Fonte Plateau came the 9th's first Medal of Honor winner, Captain Louis H. Wilson, Jr. Although wounded three times while leading his rifle company in the successful seizing of its objective on 25 July, he voluntarily rejoined his men that night during the fanatical counterattacks and led them in repulsing the enemy in a fierce 10-hour hand-to-hand struggle. Early the next morning, he organized a patrol from among his battered survivors and advanced upon a strategic slope essential to the security of his company's position. Defying intensive mortar, machine-gun and rifle fire, he drove relentlessly forward until the vital ground was taken.

The 1st and 3d Battalions had also jumped off in the attack of 25 July. During the first day, their advance units made the first contact with Marines of the 1st Brigade, which

had landed on a separate beachhead to the south. On 28 July, they stormed and captured Mount Chachao, a well-fortified stronghold with a concrete emplacement on the summit.

On 31 July, an attack was ordered to secure the northern portion of Guam with the 3d Marine Division and the Army's 77th Infantry Division moving abreast across the island. The 9th, on the right flank of the 3d Marine Division, had the task of maintaining contact with the 77th Infantry Division. On 3 August, the last of the major Marine actions, the Battle of Finegayan, was fought by the regiment.

The enemy had dug in astride the road to Finegayan village where an open area gave excellent fields of fire to the defenders. The Japanese surprised the Marines with heavy fire from these well-camouflaged positions, but Private First Class Francis P. Witek remained on his feet and emptied his gun at the Japanese killing eight of them and enabling the Marines to take cover. During the temporary withdrawal, he deliberately exposed himself to safeguard a wounded comrade. With his platoon still pinned down by a hostile machine gun, Witek boldly rushed the position, personally accounting for it and an additional eight Japanese before being struck down by an enemy rifleman. For these heroic actions, Witek earned the Medal of Honor.

Advancing against the well-organized enemy positions, the 9th supported by two tanks managed to overrun the stronghold. About 500 yards farther up the road, the Marines had to clear another road block defended by Japanese machine guns and riflemen well concealed by the heavy brush and palm groves. The drive north continued until the advance units of the 9th reached the cliffs on the north coast of Guam on the afternoon of 9 August.

With the end of organized enemy resistance, the regiment went into camp south of Ylig Bay in a coconut grove and resumed training after a short rest. This training was interrupted when a general sweep of the island was ordered to seek out and destroy or capture all Japanese stragglers. On 24 October, the 3d Marine Division moved out with its three rifle regiments abreast, the 9th in the center. (32) The sweep ended 30 October, with 617 Japanese killed and 85 prisoners, and the 9th Marines returned to its Ylig Bay camp. (33)

Iwo Jima

Life for the Marines of the 9th, like that of other American fighting men in the Pacific, was a constant round of training, combat, training, combat, and then more training for the next combat. For the Iwo Jima campaign, the 9th was not

scheduled to land with the assault forces as it had done at Bougainville and Guam; instead, V Amphibious Corps commander had selected it to form part of the floating reserve. (34) The training exercises, therefore, emphasized the various phases a reserve unit passed through while landing and moving up to the fighting. As part of the training, 1/9 staged an amphibious landing exercise witnessed by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, who had moved his headquarters from Pearl Harbor to Guam. (35)

Embarking aboard ship 8 February 1945, the 9th Marines sailed from Guam to Iwo Jima on the 17th, arriving in the floating reserve area on D-Day, 19 February. Five days later, the regiment landed and moved up to the front. The situation ashore at this time found the Japanese controlling the rough high ground to the north, east, and west, looking down the throats of the Marines below. Before any general advance could be made, a breakthrough in the Japanese center was essential. To the 3d Marine Division was given this task of clearing the critical central portion of the Motoyama Plateau by means of a frontal assault.

This assault threw the Marines directly into the enemy's strongest defenses, but the terrain precluded any other approach. Once control of the relatively flat tableland along the backbone of the island was secured, the Marines would be able to utilize interior lines to strike along the ridges to the coast, at the same time denying the enemy the positions from which he could place observed fire on the beaches. However, this plateau could be considered flat only when compared to the other mountainous parts of Iwo Jima. Actually, its volcanic sandstone was broken everywhere by jagged outcroppings and tumbled crevices. Superimposed on or embedded in this forbidding terrain, the Japanese had designed the most elaborate system of fortifications found in the Pacific. Every elevation assumed tactical importance and was bitterly defended.

On the morning of 25 February, the fresh 9th Marines passed through the front lines on the southern edge of Motoyama Airfield No. 2, and attacked with two battalions in assault and one in reserve. For three days, the Marines fought on and around the airfield, while a hail of fire from rifles, machine guns, mortars, and artillery rained down on the slow-moving Marines from the heights ahead.

During this savage fighting, another Marine of the 9th won the Medal of Honor. Singlehandedly rushing a pillbox which was holding up the advance, Private Wilson D. Watson hurled in a grenade and then ran around to the rear of the emplacement to destroy the retreating Japanese and enable his platoon to take its objective. Later, when the Marines were again pinned down, he dauntlessly scaled a jagged ridge under fierce mortar

and machine-gun fire to charge along the crest of the ridge, firing from the hip at the enemy. Standing erect on top of the ridge, Watson was able to keep up a sustained fire which killed 60 of the Japanese and allowed his platoon to join him.

Enemy defenders on two key terrain features, Hills PETER and 199 OBOE, continually hampered the advance. Finally, by means of a coordinated attack between the 1st and 2d Battalions on 27 February, the 9th overran Hill PETER and continued down the reverse slope and up to the crest of 199 OBOE. The next morning the 21st Marines relieved the depleted regiment to push the attack and break the main line of resistance of the Japanese that same day.

On 1 March, the 9th Marines again went into combat, this time just east of the village of Motoyama. Its 3d Battalion, attached to the 21st Marines, jumped off at 0800, and by late afternoon the 9th (less its 3d Battalion) was attacking abreast of the 21st Marines. The afternoon attack proved futile; neither regiment advanced very far. In order to avoid a time consuming shift of units already in the line, the 21st Marines attached their 3d Battalion to the 9th Marines, retaining control of 3/9.

The next day the 9th ran into an enemy stronghold of obvious strength. For the next three days, its Marines battled against a maze of enemy-defended caves, pillboxes, dug-in tanks, stone walls, and trenches that blocked their route of advance. On 4 March, the 9th, with its 3d Battalion returned, made repeated frustrating attempts to advance, but failed to dent the enemy positions in its front.

On 6 March, the regiment resumed the offensive in an all-out effort to breach the Japanese final defense line. Again no headway could be made against the well-entrenched enemy. Finally, in a pre-dawn attack without the usual artillery preparation, the Marines took the Japanese completely by surprise and surged through positions which had been holding them up for days.

At times during the day, however, whole battalions were cut off from the rear as the Japanese came up from underground positions to pour devastating fire on the Marines from all directions. Second Lieutenant John H. Leims, commanding Company B of the 1st Battalion, earned a Medal of Honor when he successfully extricated his men from their precarious positions and returned twice through the withering fire to rescue wounded Marines from the death trap. The men of 2/9's Company F became completely isolated and had to fight for their lives all that day and night before their comrades could break through to relieve the battered survivors.

During the day, 3/9 had succeeded in seizing Hill 262C, long a stumbling block to the advance of the regiment. This capture allowed the 9th to flank and isolate the pocket of resistance that held up the advance for so many days. One of the most perfectly devised fortifications on the island, it came to be known as "Cushman's Pocket" after the commanding officer of 2/9. Not until 16 March was 2/9 able to wipe out the final remnants of the enemy bastion. With the elimination of "Cushman's Pocket," the 3d Marine Division commander announced the end of all enemy resistance in his zone of action.

Mopping-up operations were to occupy the Marines of the 9th until 4 April, at which time the Army's 145th Infantry relieved them. On the morning of the 7th, the regiment, minus the 3d Battalion, which was left behind for several additional days to assist the Army in mopping up, boarded the USS Randall and sailed for Guam.

During the Iwo Jima campaign, the 9th Marines had performed valiantly in the most costly battle of the Marine Corps' history. As the spearhead of the 3d Marine Division, its Marines led the assault that captured Motoyama Airfield No. 2, broke the Japanese main line of resistance in the central Motoyama Plateau, and made the final breakthrough to Iwo's northeastern shore, shattering the enemy's last line of defense. The price had been heavy, and few of the veterans of Bougainville and Guam remained unscathed at the end.

Worn and battered by the Iwo Jima Campaign, the regiment arrived at Guam on 10 April to find themselves evicted from their former camp on the beach and a new area in the jungle assigned to them. (36) The 3d Battalion, returning to Guam on 17 April, joined in the construction of the new camp. Three weeks were allocated for preparing the new camp before intensive training started again in preparation for the final assault on the Japanese homeland. The 9th had completed its training and was preparing to engage in the final rehearsal, when the atomic bomb and the unconditional surrender of the Japanese made the last assault unnecessary.

The first Marine of the regiment to hear the news on the radio jumped up from his bed, crashed through the tent's screen door, and stood, barefooted and skivvy-clad, in the middle of the street, to roar, "Wahoo! Wahoo! It's over--it's over!" (37) An impromptu parade took place, and precious cans of beer were broken out to toast the victory.

After the initial excitement subsided, the 9th continued with its conditioning marches and training, for the 3d Marine Division was destined to sweat out its remaining time on Guam, a reserve force for use if the Japanese proved treacherous. High point men, who were selected on the basis of time overseas,

combat operations participated in, personal citations, and number of dependents, however, were rotated to the States. Later, after the passivity of the Japanese in the Central Pacific was assured, 3/9 was disbanded 31 October 1945.(38) On 1 December, the 9th embarked aboard the USS Hampton and sailed for San Diego, arriving and landing on the 15th. (39) On the 31st, the 9th Marines was officially disbanded at Camp Pendleton. (40)

China Interlude

In the autumn of 1947, the Marine Corps, faced with budgetary and personnel restrictions, undertook certain reorganizations in an attempt to retain on active status those units whose past combat traditions and reputation would serve to instill pride into the Marines serving in them. The rebirth of the 9th Marines at battalion strength on Guam was one result of this reorganization. On 1 October 1947, the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Brigade, Fleet Marine Force, was redesignated the 9th Marines, Fleet Marine Force.(41)

For over a year, the newly activated 9th was destined to remain on Guam, occupying its time with the usual activities of peacetime Marines. While the Marines trained and prepared themselves for any eventuality, the mainland of China was seething with a gigantic battle for power between the Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalists.

By November 1948, the civil war in China began seriously to endanger the safety of many Americans in North China because of the advance of the Chinese Communists and the military collapse of the Chinese Nationalists.(42) As a result, the Secretary of Navy ordered the 9th Marines, still stationed at Guam, to embark for China.(43) The battalion, with reinforcing units, loaded aboard the USS Bayfield on 22 November and sailed the next day for Tsingtao. Arriving on the 29th, the Marines were to assist in the evacuation of American nationalists and naval dependents from the North China area.(44)

Most of the Marines remained aboard ship ready for combat, but one rifle company and some of the reinforcing units went ashore to serve as a reserve force there. After evacuation plans were coordinated with Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific, the battalion, minus its reserve units, proceeded on 15 December to Shanghai, arriving there the next day. Again it remained aboard ship, ready to land only in the event that American lives and property were threatened.

For the next three months, the 9th was engaged in evacuation operations in China, performing the Marines' traditional role of protectors of American lives, interests, and property. Late in December, a platoon of the 9th relieved a 3d Marines'

platoon on duty at the U. S. Embassy in Nanking. The reserve units of the battalion were returned to Guam on 6 January 1949.

By mid-March, when it was evident that Tsingtao was a doomed city, the 3d Marines was ordered south to relieve the 9th Marines. On 30 March, the 9th sailed from Shanghai for the States. Before leaving, it had transferred its Company C, which had elements ashore guarding American naval facilities and on duty at the Nanking Embassy, to the 3d Marines, which redesignated it Company B.

After touching at Guam, Pearl Harbor, and the Canal Zone, the 9th Marines arrived 16 May at Moorehead City, North Carolina, and went from there to Camp Lejeune. Three days later, it became part of the 2d Provisional Marine Regiment.

On 5 October, the 9th, by now refreshed and retrained and still part of the 2d Provisional Regiment, loaded on board the USS Fremont at Little Creek, Virginia, participating the next day in LEX-1, a landing exercise. Reembarking on the Fremont, it took part on the 8th in the rehearsal for NORAMEX, a northern amphibious exercise designed to condition the Marines in landing on an arctic shore and living in a tundra environment. Then it sailed aboard the Fremont for Cape Porcupine, Labrador, and NORAMEX. While en route, the 9th Marines was redesignated the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, as a result of a further reorganization of the Marine Corps. Thus, on 17 October 1949, the name of the 9th Marines again was dropped from the muster rolls of the Marine Corps.

The Later Years

During the Korean War, the 9th Marines was again reactivated at Camp Pendleton as an integral part of the 3d Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, on 17 March 1952.(45) When all of its component units were activated, the regiment consisted of Headquarters and Service Company, three rifle battalions, Anti-Tank Company, and 4.2 Mortar Company. For the first several months of the unit's existence, training and drill kept its Marines busy.

On 8 September, the 9th sailed from San Diego to participate in AIRLEX-1, the first operation of its kind ever attempted by the Marine Corps. This unique maneuver demonstrated the use of the "airhead," sequel to the beachhead of World War II. In a massive air landing operation using several types of aircraft, Marines established and held an airhead at Camp Hawthorne, Nevada.

During October the 3d Marine Division, after nine days aboard ship off the coast of southern California, started its

amphibious landing maneuver, PHIBEX-1. This was a standard amphibious training exercise using landing boats; however, an entire battalion of the 9th was transported in a surprise "airhead" assault landing. In December, the regiment went to the other extreme in training exercises when it participated in FEX-1, a desert training problem near Twenty-Nine Palms, California, in the middle of 800 square miles of desert. In April 1953, a return to their more natural habitat was made, when the Marines participated in PHIBEX-II, another amphibious exercise.

In the summer of 1953, the 3d Marine Division was ordered to Japan to strengthen the Far East Command by serving as a mobile force in readiness. The 9th Marines left the States in August and was established by October in Camp Gifu, Japan. On 14 October, the regiment departed via railway for winter maneuvers at Camp Fuji-McNair, Japan. A month later, it staged a three-day helicopter exercise.

On 14 January 1954, the 9th embarked aboard ship at Nagoya and sailed for Okinawa and a landing exercise. Shortly after returning to Japan, it made a change in location from Camp Gifu to the newly-renovated Camp Shinodayama, about 10 miles southwest of Osaka, Japan. During March, the regiment participated in LEX-1 at Iwo Jima. The next month it moved to Camp Fuji-McNair for a 30-day training mission in the field. During June, the 1st Battalion participated in an 18-hour air-ground training maneuver, being transported from Itami to Atsugi, while 2/9 acted as the aggressor in an amphibious exercise on Okinawa.

In July, the 9th Marines again changed its location, this time to Camp Sakai, Japan. A week of intensive helicopter training was conducted by 1/9 at the Aebano maneuver area near Lake Biva. The regiment participated in Operation LOTUS in August on Okinawa. With the coming of winter, another move was made on 27 October to Camp Fuji-McNair and training maneuvers. On 5 December, the regiment returned to Camp Sakai. During these rigorous training maneuvers, the Marines of the 9th still found time to perform an act of kindness by turning into lumberjacks and cutting up a winter's supply of 600 trees for the Fuji Leper Colony.

During the remainder of its stay in Japan, the 9th with other elements of the 3d Marine Division was constantly undergoing intensive training in amphibious and land warfare in fulfillment of its role as a ready force for the Far East Command. In addition, the Marines created a feeling of goodwill among the Japanese for the United States by their generous donations to charities and the giving of Christmas parties for orphans. Time was also found for sports, and the regiment won honors in boxing, football, baseball, swimming, and other athletic

activities.

After participating in the NAVMARLEX maneuvers at Okinawa in June, the 9th Marines relocated its base to Camp Napunja, Okinawa, on 5 July 1955. During the same month, the 3d Marine Division's headquarters was moved to Okinawa. This move was a result of a recent agreement with Japan which called for the removal of American ground forces.

A brief return to Japan was made in September, for TRAEX-8 maneuvers at Camp Fuji-McNair. In December, the 9th Marines played the role of aggressor as the 3d Marines stormed ashore on the beaches of Okinawa in a mock attack. Another change of location came in January 1956, when the regiment moved to Camp Sukiran, Okinawa. During February, 1/9 participated in SEATO's Operation FIRM LINK, gigantic maneuvers staged in Thailand. During these maneuvers, the helicopter demonstration of the Marines especially intrigued the allied observers. Afterwards, the Marines paraded through the streets of Bangkok, the capital of Thailand.

On 15 April a firing squad from the 9th took part in a ceremony commemorating Ernie Pyle, the famed World War II war correspondent, beside his grave on Ie Shima. In May, the regiment stormed ashore at Kin beach in a full-scale amphibious exercise. During August, 1/9 staged a mock atomic attack at Hansen Range, vividly displaying the mobility and effectiveness of modern vertical envelopment by means of the helicopter. In October, Marines of the 9th participated in Operation TEAMWORK in Thailand, demonstrating an amphibious assault on the beach at Had Chao Samran. Over 25,000 spectators looked on as the U. S. Marines cooperated with the Royal Thai Marines.

During 1957, the regiment changed its location several times. On 5 April, it moved from Okinawa to Middle Camp, Fuji, Japan. Returning to Okinawa, the 9th established itself at Camp Hauge in October. Also during the year, the Marines participated in two large-scale training exercises, NAVMARLEX-1 and RLTX 58 DELTA.

On 1 February 1958, the regiment moved to Camp Elbert L. Kinser, Okinawa. Later in the month, it sailed for the Philippine Islands and Operation STRONGBACK, the largest maneuver staged in the Pacific by U. S. Armed Forces since World War II. Returning to Okinawa in early March, the 9th made camp again at Camp Sukiran.

During April, 1/9 took a 91.3 mile training hike around Okinawa as part of its fitness program. Sailing from the island in September, the Marines of the 9th participated in Exercise LAND HO in the Taiwan Area. During December, 2/9 finished successfully a 19-day survival and guerrilla training exercise some 26 miles north of Nago.

The first month of 1959 found the regiment experimenting during field exercises with new training methods, such as the use of realistic plastic reproductions of wounds to help train Marines in the treatment of battle injuries. The next month, Marines of 3/9 engaged in a tactical air-lift from Camp Sukiran to Camp Bishigawa, where they destroyed a simulated enemy objective before being heli-lifted again back to their camp.

In June the entire regiment sailed for North Borneo and Operation SADDLE UP, the first amphibious operation involving SEATO forces. Using helicopters, amphibian tractors and landing craft to get ashore, the Marines conducted the training exercise in some of the worst terrain and living conditions that any Marine had faced since hitting the beaches at Guadalcanal.

Besides constantly training and experimenting with new weapons and techniques of warfare in order to remain combat ready, the Marines, as they had done in Japan, made friends with the people of Okinawa through acts of kindness and consideration. Nor did they neglect the field of sports, for their athletic honors continued to multiply.

The next large-scale training exercise took place in May 1960. Designed to improve amphibious planning and promote a closer working relationship between the forces of the United States and those of the government of the Republic of China, Operation BLUE STAR was a five-day amphibious exercise on the southern part of Formosa. Under the protective cover of Marine and Chinese aircraft, joint forces of combat-ready U. S. and Chinese Nationalist Marines assaulted the beaches of Formosa in one of the largest ship-to-shore war games in the Western Pacific area since World War II.

During June, the Marines of the 9th participated in the joint U. S. - Republic of Korea amphibious training exercise, Operation SEA HAWK, held near Pohang, Korea. Marines of both nations worked closely together, making good use of vertical envelopment, and helped to increase the proficiency of operations between the U. S. and the Republic of Korea forces.

Towards the end of the year, 1/9 participated in Operation PACKBOARD, a training maneuver emphasizing jungle warfare and anti-guerrilla operations. This exercise in northern Okinawa by elements of the 7th Fleet and the 3d Marine Division revealed the helicopter to be a successful weapon against guerrilla forces and a useful means of supplying troops in jungle terrain.

On 1 January 1961, the infantry transplacement battalions of the 1st and 3d Marine Divisions were redesignated to conform with their present regiment. This change was made as a means

of eliminating the administrative difficulty which had resulted from the units being allowed to maintain their original identities. Transplacement battalions had come into being a few years back when the Marine Corps decided to relieve its Marines stationed on Okinawa by relieving units rather than individual Marines, thus retaining the unity and efficiency of the battalion by keeping its men serving together. Under the old transplacement plan, a battalion transplacing between the 1st Marine Division in the States and the 3d Marine Division in Okinawa would retain its original regiment's identity. From now on, a transplacement battalion would exchange names with the unit it relieved. As a result of this new transplacement plan, the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions, 7th Marines, were redesignated the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions, 9th Marines. This action changed only the correct administrative title of the battalions and did not involve the physical movement of Marines, although some of the battalions were in the process of transplacement at the time.

In May 1961, the 9th Marines participated in Operation PONY EXPRESS, a combined SEATO amphibious exercise on the northern shore of Borneo. When a Communist buildup in Southeast Asia threatened Thailand in the summer of 1962, the 9th had a chance to prove its value as a force in readiness. The 3d Battalion landed at Bangkok and proceeded to the Udorn area, some 40 miles from the Mekong River, where it remained as a deterrent to any aggression until the danger had passed. In addition, each battalion of the 9th took its turn as the "floating battalion," a Battalion Landing Team continuously afloat in ships of the Seventh Fleet and serving as its mobile striking arm. The regiment remained permanently stationed on Okinawa until it was committed to Vietnam in 1965.

The Ninth Marines in Vietnam (46)

A battalion of the 9th Marines was one of the first units to land in Vietnam following the decision to commit Marine forces against the Viet Cong. On 8 March 1965, BLT (Battalion Landing Team) 3/9, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. McPartlin, Jr., landed in Da Nang in central Vietnam as part of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade. The brigade's mission was to defend the Da Nang Air Base, which at that time was under constant threat of attack by the Viet Cong. Marines of 3/9 quickly and effectively secured the airbase and its immediate vicinity and remained at that location until they were relieved by BLT 1/9 under Lieutenant Colonel Verle E. Ludwig on 16 June 1965. BLT 3/9 returned to Okinawa, where on 18 July another battalion, fresh from the United States, was designated 3d Battalion, 9th Marines.

On 4 July 1965, the regimental commander, Colonel Frank E. Garretson, brought his headquarters to Da Nang from Okinawa

and the regiment became part of the III Marine Amphibious Force in South Vietnam. On the same date, the 2d Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel George R. Scharnberg, also arrived. On 15 August, when the 3d Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Tunnell, Jr., reached Da Nang the regiment had all three of its organic battalions committed against the Viet Cong.

In its first year in Vietnam, the 9th Marines, located on the east coast of South Vietnam in the Da Nang tactical area of responsibility, occupied an area of approximately one hundred and fifty square miles. Bounded by three major rivers, the Song Cau Do to the north, Song Yen-Song Vu Gia to the west, and the Song Thu Bon-Song Ky Lam to the south, the zone of action contained numerous small riverways, heavy vegetation, and a relatively high population density. On 15 June 1966, the responsibility for the eastern sector, a sandy, lightly populated area, and the area south of Song Cau Do, running parallel to the river, was assigned to another regiment of the III MAF.

Contiguous to the zone of action of the 9th Marines was the An Hoa light industrial complex, an area of considerable economic potential to the people of Da Nang and surrounding Quang Nam Province. During late April and early May 1966, the 3d Battalion conducted an extensive search and destroy operation in the vicinity of the industrial complex and paved the way for the reestablishment of Government of Vietnam influence in the area.

During 1965 and 1966, the regiment developed several tactics and techniques particularly suited for its zone of action. Beginning in September 1965, at the height of the rice harvest season, the 9th Marines inaugurated Operation GOLDEN FLEECE, so named because of the nature of the mission. Working in conjunction with local Vietnamese units and district officials, 9th Marines units conducted search and destroy operations in the vicinity of areas where rice was to be harvested and also provided security for the villagers. This type of operation was successful both militarily and politically and was instrumental in establishing Marine-Vietnamese rapport throughout the regimental zone of action.

As the regiment advanced south of the Song Cau Do, contacts with the Viet Cong rose sharply. The zone of action was increasingly characterized by intense short-lived encounters on the small unit level. This indicated the need for a quick response by a highly maneuverable small force with adequate fire power, which the 9th Marines met with the development of the SPARROW HAWK concept in January 1966. Each forward battalion maintained a reinforced rifle squad on daylight alert for immediate deployment by helicopter to any destination in its zone of action to exploit contact with hostile forces. Transport and armed helicopters were on strip alert at the Marble Mountain Air Facility at Da Nang and upon request from the battalion,

were immediately deployed to a designated landing zone to pick up the "SPARROW HAWK" squad. These Marines were then landed in the enemy's rear or flank. This Marine tactical unit was utilized as a separate maneuver element on the ground either in a mobile role or as a separate blocking force, but not as a reinforcing element. By 30 June 1966, the 9th Marines had successfully employed SPARROW HAWK 45 times and had achieved significant results.

In October 1965, the area to the rear of the 2d Battalion's zone of action was chosen by the Government of Vietnam as the location for a priority pacification program known as the Five Mountains Pacification Campaign. Civic action as a "new weapons system" gained increasing importance as the program, supported by the 9th Marines, picked up momentum. In an effort to provide maximum assistance to the pacification program and, at the same time, to accomplish one of its priority missions, the destruction of the Viet Cong--the 9th Marines developed Operation COUNTY FAIR in February 1966.

COUNTY FAIR was a combination of military, civic, and psychological-warfare actions to reestablish Vietnamese control over the populace of a given area. It was designed to flush the Viet Cong from the community in which they were a parasite, while at the same time insuring that the populace was not alienated towards the government. Military actions were accompanied by a vigorous civic action program which attempted to convince the population that the Government of Vietnam was interested in the welfare of the people and that a government victory against the Viet Cong was inevitable.

The 9th Marines' participation in COUNTY FAIR operations consisted of cordoning a target area (village or hamlet) in order to isolate it for the duration of the operation (normally two days) and providing limited medical and logistical assistance. To the largest extent possible, Vietnamese military, police, and civil authorities performed the task of searching the target areas and handling the populace. This was considered an essential element of COUNTY FAIR operations, since one of its primary purposes was to restore the populace's confidence in the Vietnamese governmental structure and to instill a sense of trust and loyalty towards duly appointed officials.

During its first year of deployment in Vietnam, the 9th Marines took part in approximately 45 battalion and several hundred company-size operations within the Da Nang tactical area of responsibility as well as in several III Marine Amphibious Force operations outside the Da Nang area.

In Retrospect

After almost a half-century of existence, the 9th Marines can look back upon its past history with pride. The regiment performed valiantly on the beaches and in the jungles of Bougainville and Guam, as well as on the volcanic ash of Iwo Jima in the most costly battle of the Corps' history, and now has fought with distinction in Vietnam. First created in time of war, each new national crisis has brought it back into being, and each time it has carried out its mission successfully. Present-day Marines serving under the battle streamers of the 9th's regimental standard can share equally in the pride of combat-earned honors and the confident belief that the "Striking Ninth" will continue to perform courageously in any future crisis.

NOTES

- (1) Clyde H. Metcalf, A History of the United States Marine Corps. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939). p. 456, hereafter Metcalf, USMC History.
- (2) CMC ltr to CO, MB, Quantico, Va., dtd 10Nov17 (HistBr Archives, G-3 Division, HQMC).
- (3) Ibid.; Muster Rolls, 9th Regiment, Nov17 (Unit Diary Section, Personnel Department, HQMC), hereafter Muster Rolls with unit, month, and year.
- (4) Ibid.; CMC ltr to CO, MB, Quantico, Va., dtd 10Nov17 (HistBr Archives, G-3 Division, HQMC).
- (5) Metcalf, USMC History, p. 336.
- (6) Ibid., p. 337.
- (7) Muster Rolls, 9th Regiment, Dec17, and, unless otherwise cited, the Muster Rolls are the source of the following account of the 9th Regiment during World War I.
- (8) Metcalf, USMC History, p. 337; Muster Rolls, 3d Provisional Marine Brigade, Dec17; Muster Rolls, 7th Regiment, Dec17.
- (9) 1stLt L. D. Burrus, USMCR, (ed.), The Ninth Marines: A Brief History of the Ninth Marine Regiment with Lists of the Officers and Men Who Served From Organization to Disbandment 1942-45 (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1946), p. 30, hereafter Burrus, Ninth; Metcalf, USMC History, p. 460.
- (10) Burrus, Ninth, p. 30.
- (11) "Report of the Commandant of the Marine Corps" in Report of the Secretary of the Navy 1918, p. 1608.
- (12) Muster Rolls, 9th Regiment, Dec25-Sep37; Burrus, Ninth, p. 31.
- (13) Richard W. Johnston, Follow Me! The Story of the Second Marine Division in World War II (New York: Random House, 1948), p. 16; Muster Rolls, 9th Marines, Feb42. Unless otherwise cited, the Muster Rolls are the source of the 9th Marines' history until the Bougainville campaign.
- (14) 1stLt Robert A. Aurthur, USMCR, and 1stLt Kenneth Cohlmlia, USMCR, The Third Marine Division (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), p. 11, hereafter Aurthur and Cohlmlia, Third Marine Division.

- (15) Ibid.
- (16) Ibid., p. 12
- (17) Burrus, Ninth, p. 33
- (18) Ibid.
- (19) Ibid., pp. 34-35.
- (20) Aurthur and Cohlmaia, Third Marine Division, p. 14.
- (21) Burrus, Ninth, p. 36.
- (22) Aurthur and Cohlmaia, Third Marine Division, p. 14.
- (23) Burrus, Ninth, pp. 37-38
- (24) Ibid., pp. 38-39.
- (25) Maj John N. Rentz, USMCR, Bougainville and the Northern Solomons (Washington: Historical Section, Division of Public Information, HQMC, 1948), p. 24, and, unless otherwise cited, the source of the following account of the 9th Marines on Bougainville.
- (26) Maj Frank O. Hough, USMCR, The Island War (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1947), p. 113, hereafter Hough, Island War.
- (27) Aurthur and Cohlmaia, Third Marine Division, p. 73.
- (28) Burrus, Ninth, p. 52.
- (29) Maj O. R. Lodge, The Recapture of Guam (Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1954) pp. 27-28, and, unless otherwise cited, the source of the following account of the 9th Marines on Guam.
- (30) Hough, Island War, p. 269.
- (31) Jeter A. Islely and Philip A. Crowl, The U. S. Marines and Amphibious War: Its Theory, and Its Practice in the Pacific (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951) p. 373.
- (32) Burrus, Ninth, p. 72.
- (33) Aurthur and Cohlmaia, Third Marine Division, p. 167.
- (34) LtCol Whitman S. Bartley, USMC, Iwo Jima: Amphibious Epic (Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1954), p. 26, and, unless otherwise cited, the source of

the following account of the 9th Marines during the Iwo Jima campaign.

- (35) Burrus, Ninth, p. 76.
- (36) Aurthur and Cohlmlia, Third Marine Division, p. 323.
- (37) Ibid., p. 330.
- (38) Muster Rolls, 9th Marines, Oct45.
- (39) Ibid., Dec45.
- (40) Ibid.
- (41) Unless otherwise cited, the source of the following account of the 9th Marines in China has been obtained from the Muster Rolls of the 9th Marines for this period and Henry I. Shaw, Jr., "North China Marines" (MS, HistBr, G-3, HQMC).
- (42) Henry I. Shaw, Jr., The United States Marines in North China, 1945-1949 (Marine Corps Historical Reference Series No. 23, HistBr, G-3, HQMC, 1960), p. 22.
- (43) Ibid., pp. 22-23.
- (44) North China Marine. (Tsingtao, China), 4Dec48, p. 1.
- (45) 9th Marines Unit Diary, Mar52 (Unit Diary Section, Personnel Department, HQMC). The Unit Diaries of the 9th Marines from March 1952 to January 1963 provided the source for the remainder of this section. Certain information, not obtainable from the unit diaries has been taken from the following newspapers of the period: The Pendleton Scout (Camp Pendleton, California) and The Triad (3d Marine Division).
- (46) CO, 9th Marines ltr to CMC, dtd 4Jul66 (HistBr, G-3 Division, HQMC) provided the basis for the narrative concerning the 9th Marines in Vietnam.

APPENDIX A

COMMANDING OFFICERS, 9TH MARINES, 1917-1961

Introduction

Since the beginning of the Marine Corps, there has only been one regimental organization bearing the designation "Ninth" at any given time. The following list enumerates the Commanding Officers of this regiment. A series of asterisks have been used at the end of particular rosters to indicate total disbandment of a regiment. Absence of asterisks between regimental headings indicates a redesignation. A single asterisk indicates that the Commanding Officer later became a Commandant of the Marine Corps.

9th Regiment, Advanced Base Force

Note: Organized at Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia, on 20 November 1917 as one of the two infantry regiments of the Advanced Base Force during World War I.

1stLt	Robert W. Williams	20 Nov 1917 - 22 Nov 1917
Maj	Rush R. Wallace	23 Nov 1917 - 25 Nov 1917
LtCol	Frederic L. Bradman	26 Nov 1917 - 25 Dec 1917

9th Regiment, 3d Provisional Brigade

LtCol	Frederic L. Bradman	26 Dec 1917 - 23 Jan 1918
Col	Thomas C. Treadwell	24 Jan 1918 - 30 Apr 1918
	None Designated	1 May 1918 - 30 Jun 1918
Col	Thomas C. Treadwell	1 Jul 1918 - 17 Aug 1918
Col	George C. Reid	18 Aug 1918 - 31 Oct 1918
	None Designated	1 Nov 1918 - 31 Dec 1918
Col	George C. Reid	1 Jan 1919 - 31 Jan 1919
	None Designated	1 Feb 1919 - 31 Mar 1919
Col	George C. Reid	1 Apr 1919 - 25 Apr 1919

Note: On 25 April 1919, the 9th Regiment disbanded upon debarking at the Navy Yard, Philadelphia.

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9th Marines, 2d Marine Division

Note: Reactivated at Camp Elliott, San Diego, as an integral part of the 2d Marine Division.

LtCol	William B. Onley	12 Feb 1942 - 15 Mar 1942
*Col	Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.	16 Mar 1942 - 31 Jul 1942

9th Marines, Reinforced, 2d Marine Division

*Col Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. 1 Aug 1942 - 2 Aug 1942

9th Marines, Reinforced, Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet

*Col Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. 3 Aug 1942 - 7 Sep 1942

9th Marines, Reinforced, 3d Marine Division

*Col Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. 8 Sep 1942 - 21 Nov 1942

9th Marines, 3d Marine Division

*Col Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. 22 Nov 1942 - 31 Dec 1942

9th Marines, Reinforced, 3d Marine Division

*Col Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. 1 Jan 1943 - 19 Jun 1943

9th Marines, 3d Marine Division

*Col	Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.	20 Jun 1943 - 19 Jul 1943
Col	Edward A. Craig	20 Jul 1943 - 17 Aug 1943
LtCol	James A. Stuart (Acting)	18 Aug 1943 - 22 Aug 1943
Col	Edward A. Craig	23 Aug 1943 - 21 Sep 1944
Col	Howard N. Kenyon	22 Sep 1944 - 1 Oct 1945
LtCol	William R. Williams (Acting)	2 Oct 1945 - 9 Oct 1945
Col	Howard N. Kenyon	10 Oct 1945 - 13 Oct 1945
LtCol	William R. Williams	14 Oct 1945 - 26 Nov 1945
LtCol	James H. Tinsley	27 Nov 1945 - 29 Nov 1945

9th Marines, Reinforced

LtCol James H. Tinsley 30 Nov 1945 - 31 Dec 1945

Note: On 31 December 1945, the 9th Marines were disbanded at Camp Pendleton, California.

9th Marines

Note: The 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Brigade, Fleet Marine Force (FMF), was redesignated 9th Marines, FMF, on 1 October 1947.

LtCol	Ralph A. Collins, Jr.	1 Oct 1947 - 23 Nov 1947
Maj	Charles J. Bailey, Jr. (Acting)	24 Nov 1947 - 28 Nov 1947
LtCol	Ralph A. Collins, Jr.	29 Nov 1947 - 29 Feb 1948
Col	Thomas B. Hughes	1 Mar 1948 - 9 May 1948
LtCol	Ralph A. Collins, Jr. (Acting)	10 May 1948 - 19 May 1948

Col	Thomas B. Hughes	20 May 1948 - 31 May 1948
LtCol	Ralph A. Collins, Jr. (Acting)	1 Jun 1948 - 9 Jun 1948
Col	Thomas B. Hughes	10 Jun 1948 - 20 Jun 1948
LtCol	Ralph A. Collins, Jr. (Acting)	21 Jun 1948 - 26 Jun 1948
Col	Thomas B. Hughes	27 Jun 1948 - 31 Oct 1948

9th Marines, Reinforced

Col	Thomas B. Hughes	1 Nov 1948 - 30 Nov 1948
Maj	Walter W. Stegemerten (Acting)	1 Dec 1948 - 3 Dec 1948
Col	Thomas B. Hughes	4 Dec 1948 - 5 Dec 1948
Maj	Walter W. Stegemerten (Acting)	6 Dec 1948 - 10 Dec 1948
Col	Thomas B. Hughes	11 Dec 1948 - 18 May 1949

9th Marines, 2d Provisional Marine Regiment

LtCol	William J. Piper, Jr.	19 May 1949 - 4 Jul 1949
Maj	Lucien W. Carmichael	5 Jul 1949 - 28 Jul 1949
LtCol	Frederick R. Dowsett	29 Jul 1949 - 11 Sep 1949

9th Marines, Reinforced, 2d Provisional Marine Regiment

LtCol	Frederick R. Dowsett	12 Sep 1949 - 17 Oct 1949
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Note: On 17 October 1949, en route aboard ship to Cape Porcupine, Labrador, the designation of the regiment was changed to 3d Battalion (Reinforced), 6th Marines, 2d Marine Division, FMF.

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9th Marines

Note: Reactivated at Camp Pendleton, California, as an integral part of the 3d Marine Division, FMF, on 17 March 1952.

Col	John J. Gormley	18 Mar 1952 - 15 Nov 1952
Col	William W. Buchanan	16 Nov 1952 - 2 Apr 1954
Col	George A. Roll	3 Apr 1954 - 7 Sep 1954
LtCol	John A. Copeland	8 Sep 1954 - 24 Oct 1954
Col	Cliff Atkinson, Jr.	25 Oct 1954 - 11 Jul 1955
LtCol	Henry J. Revane	12 Jul 1955 - 16 Aug 1955
Col	Howard B. Bengé	17 Aug 1955 - 30 Sep 1955

9th Marines, Reinforced

Col	Howard B. Bengé	1 Oct 1955 - 1 Mar 1956
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Col	Peter J. Speckman	2 Mar 1956 - 30 Jun 1956
Col	Carl A. Laster	1 Jul 1956 - 28 Dec 1956
LtCol	James A. Donovan, Jr. (Acting)	29 Dec 1956 - 5 Jan 1957
Col	James C. Murray, Jr.	6 Jan 1957 - 14 Jul 1957
Col	Clyde R. Nelson	15 Jul 1957 - 14 Apr 1958

9th Marines

Col	Clyde R. Nelson	15 Apr 1958 - 1 May 1958
Col	Francis W. Benson	2 May 1958 - 16 Sep 1958
Col	Leonard M. Mason	17 Sep 1958 - 1 Apr 1959
Col	Roy J. Batterton, Jr.	2 Apr 1959 - 16 Oct 1959
Col	Randall L. Stallings	17 Oct 1959 - 7 May 1960
Col	Wilbur R. Holmer	8 May 1960 - 8 Nov 1960
Col	William A. Stiles	9 Nov 1960 - 28 Jun 1961
Col	Samuel D. Mandeville, Jr.	29 Jun 1961 - 8 May 1962
Col	John H. McMillan	9 May 1962 - 4 Sep 1962
Col	Gordon D. Gayle	5 Sep 1962 - 16 Feb 1963
Col	George R. Stallings	17 Feb 1963 - 10 Dec 1963
Col	Cleland E. Early	11 Dec 1963 - 31 Jul 1964
Col	Frank E. Garretson	1 Aug 1964 - 13 Aug 1965
Col	John E. Gormon	14 Aug 1965 - 15 Feb 1966
Col	Edwin H. Simmons	16 Feb 1966 - 4 Jul 1966
Col	Drew J. Barrett	5 Jul 1966 - 6 Oct 1966
Col	Robert M. Richards	7 Oct 1966 - 4 Apr 1967
Col	Robert M. Jenkins	5 Apr 1967

APPENDIX B

9TH MARINES MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Capt	Louis H. Wilson, Jr.	-	25-26 Jul 1944	-	Fonte Hill, Guam
Pfc	Frank P. Witek	-	3 Aug 1944	-	Battle of Finegayen, Guam
Pvt	Wilson D. Watson	-	26-27 Feb 1945	-	Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands
2dLt	John H. Leims	-	7 Mar 1945	-	Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands

APPENDIX C

CAMPAIGN STREAMERS OF 9TH MARINES

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

Guam Campaign (earned by 2/9)	24 Jul 1944 - 1 Aug 1944
Iwo Jima Campaign	19 Feb 1945 - 28 Feb 1945

WORLD WAR I VICTORY STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

Cuba	Nov 1917 - 11 Nov 1918
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ASIATIC-PACIFIC STREAMER WITH THREE BRONZE STARS

Treasury-Bougainville Campaign	1 Nov 1943 - 15 Dec 1943
Northern Solomons Campaign	15 Dec 1943 - 28 Dec 1943
Guam Campaign	21 Jul 1944 - 15 Aug 1944
Iwo Jima Campaign	19 Feb 1945 - 16 Mar 1945

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

12 Feb 1942 - 28 Dec 1945

CHINA SERVICE STREAMER

29 Nov 1948 - 29 Mar 1949

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

17 Mar 1952 - 27 Jul 1954
1 Jan 1961 -

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER

Thailand (earned by 3/9)	17 May 1962 - 29 Jul 1962
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ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER

Vietnam	9 Mar 1965 - 3 Jul 1965
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VIETNAM SERVICE STREAMER

4 Jul 1965 -

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